

A ROMANCE.

It happened at Hanley, five years ago, when my brother Jim and I belonged to the traveling circus company. We were billed as the "Chinese Javelin-Throwers," which meant that one of us stood motionless against a framework, while the other cast two-edged knives all about him from a measured distance. Dangerous work, of course, and work that required incessant practice; but it paid, because we could always hold the crowd's breath. Hundreds, for instance, would pay their money just to see that last trick, when the thrower had to pin his target's head to the board by three blades hurled in quick succession—one on either side of the neck and one over the crown. Our reputation for smartness was justified. I only remember one solitary misadventure: Jim, swerving at a shout, had once laid open my cheek. Quite by accident, of course, because I don't suppose two men were ever more sincerely attached to one another than he and I—until that first night at Hanley just before Christmas. Then the shadow of a woman somehow glided between us. But you have guessed that. There could hardly be romance without a woman.

They say that every woman has a kind of beauty to some man's way of thinking, and perhaps that explains why, when I first saw Lottie Somerset, I saw something which set me trembling for my peace of mind at once. She had just joined us, and was riding as "Britannia" in the town procession, with dark hair waving loose, gauzy white ruffs fluttering, clear eyes shining calmly down at the crowd, and a slight figure swaying atop of the triumphal car.

That was nothing. Most of them had a more or less angelic look on that lofty perch. The mischief began when, as Lottie stepped to the ground, we found that distance had lent very little to her looks. I say we; for instinct told me very soon that the same fever had seized Jim. Just as I was conscious that I threw my best that night, because she looked on from a side door, so I know that Jim held his curly head an inch higher for the same reason. It was the same the next night, and the next. Before I knew it a jealousy of him and his superior looks had sprung up in me.

He was handsome; more, he was coolly confident. Night after night I watched how, as he stood smiling there in the bright light, with the knives whizzing about him, his eyes were always turned to that side door. Uncertainty alone checked any words between us. As the days went by, no one could have said that either of us had made a way into her affections. Sometimes I would believe I had made her understand, and would go home on feet of air, while Jim would be moodily quiet; then, next night it would be Jim with the flushed cheeks, and myself white-faced and savage. We never spoke of it, yet the shadow grew thicker between us. And it always seemed to me that Jim, working in the dark, would be the winner in this silent desperate struggle.

For it had come to desperation. One night (our last but one at Hanley) I saw her give him the sprig of scarlet berries she had just won. That was the match to the powder; my jealousy flamed up in a moment.

He was excited. He talked feverishly as we walked back to our lodging. I listened, teeth and hands clenched. When he said, among other things, that Lottie Somerset was thinking of leaving the circus, and had advised him to give up his dangerous profession, I felt as though he had dealt me a physical blow. It stupefied me, or I think I should have ended it then and there because he spoke as though the secret and desire of Lottie's heart were at one with his own. By the time that we reached our room I hated my brother Jim.

Hate is the father of evil suggestions. I wanted those berries—or, rather, I meant to know how much the gift implied. But he seemed too excited to understand. He set up on dummy figure against the wall and began practice, but soon gave it up, because the knives either went wide or pierced the dummy. Then he paced the room, saying that his hand was losing its cunning, and he should certainly abandon the profession for a more noble one. Finally he sat down and hung dreamily over the sprig of berries, acting as though he had been alone with some great delight.

And that maddened me. I was hardly conscious of it, but the truth is that I snatched up one of the knives and took aim at him as he sat. No more than that. He came to himself suddenly, and put up both hands with a shout of surprise.

"Max, Max, you'd never do it to your own brother!"

"Drop them!" I whispered, so fiercely, that he began to realize.

He obeyed. "Oh, Max!" was all he said, in a shocked voice.

The knife fell from my fingers. I loved him while I hated; a soft word from him would have brought me to my knees. But he only sat, staring from me to the berries. In that minute each tried to read the other's thoughts, and he must have read aright. He picked up the berries and held them out. "Very well, then," he said, quietly, "take them."

Passion had made me perverse. "I don't want them," I replied, harshly; "I want her!" I took up the knife and went to the door. "Jim," I said, pointing it at him, "let that be enough. It means—don't come between us."

Most of that night I spent wandering the streets, ready to cry like a child when I thought of him sitting alone there, and insanely mad again at the thought of losing Lottie to him. How he passed the hours heaven alone could know.

I saw nothing more of him until the next evening, when he and I walked as knights in the last procession. He was a shade paler than usual, but did not speak. A little later I saw him talking earnestly with Lottie, and her hand rested upon his own once or twice. She beckoned to me, but by then I was in a blaze. I turned with a sneer, which deepened when I saw her surprised and pained look. She, proud in her own way, would not beckon again, and when I came from the dressing room, ready for our performance, they were still talking together.

Presently Jim coughed and came

across. "Er—Max," he began, "I'm queer to-night. I don't think I shall come on—or not just yet; get the manager to put it off for a bit, will you?"

He was very pale. Therefore I was hard and unsympathetic as stone. "It's not connected with nervousness," I said, laughing, because Lottie stood close by.

"Put it down to that, if you will," he spoke and looked steadily, but hesitated all the same. The laugh had its effect. A minute more, and he had thrown off his mock armor, and was ready. He stepped into the arena, bowing in response to the murmur of the crowd—a large one.

The amphitheater was packed, and I felt equal to a brilliant performance. So with Jim, apparently. He took the first spell at throwing, and his aim was markedly bad—although the knives always went wide of the mark rather than too near to it. He even omitted his final trick altogether, and there was but little applause when he stepped up to take my place at the board. And I, while I felt easily able to vindicate our reputation, yet had a queer, giddy sensation for which I could not account. The lights danced; the faces were blurred. Perhaps it was that, having my eyes fixed on Jim as I took the mark, I saw that he wore those red berries in his vest as if in defiance.

I threw carefully, and threw well. I can remember that shout after shout went up as, after fixing a narrow and exact circle of the knives about Jim's head, like a steel halo, I went on and planted a blade between every finger of his outstretched hands. He stood very still that last night, and I thought I could tell how he overcame his nervousness when, happening to look behind, I saw Lottie Somerset standing at that side door. Her hands were clasped; she appeared to be in suspense. And, at that irritating sight, a wicked inspiration flashed into me.

I had three knives left, and Jim—Jim stood there, his white throat so clear! To check it I did not try, but took a step or two forward, as though calculating for my aim.

"Jim," I called, so that he and no one else could hear. I had one of the knives in my hand. "Jim! It can't go on longer. Quick!—is she to be yours or mine?"

He seemed to grasp the situation, as I meant he should. His lips moved, and I caught a faint "Max!" At that dreadful moment he looked like some martyr about to die for his faith—but, doubtless, it was my conscience suggested that. He could not well escape, for his waist was strapped to the board. Perhaps, too, my look paralyzed him. I felt desperate enough, knowing, duly, that I contemplated risking life here and soul hereafter out of love for a woman who would never call me husband. Just a second more I hesitated. Then that vile inner voice whispered: "Throw!"

And I threw—for a spot just above those scarlet berries on his breast: threw with unutterably steady aim, I thought, and saw the blade quiver in Jim's hand. Then God was merciful enough to encompass my faculties with an utter darkness.

When I partly lifted the arena and the ring of faces had gone. I was lying on the bed in our own room. And dreaming, surely, for there was a man at the foot of the bed, and when he raised his face, it seemed as though I was looking at my brother Jim. He moved. It was Jim's voice that spoke. And, oh, his eyes!

"Max—forward!" came the two hollow syllables.

My own tongue was stiff. If I answered, it was with a look only. Truly I believed that Jim's ghost had come to me.

The same hollow voice sounded again.

"You need not speak; you need not be afraid. I know everything. I only wanted to be sure that you should know this. I've solved your problem. Two brothers loved the same woman: one more than his own life; but the other—more than his immortal soul, it seems. Erzo, he must have her, because his love is the stronger. That's it, but there's a condition."

I had no fear yet; only vague awe at the intense realism of the dream in which this curly-headed man put a hand to his forehead, just as dead Jim used sometimes to do.

"There's a condition. I'll leave the way clear for you, but if you marry Lottie"—he whispered impressively as he bent over—"and then discover that your love was more powerful than mine, why, then I shall come back and take the revenge I might have now. I mean, Max, I shall have the right then to win her away from you, as I think I could have done a week ago!"

"A week ago?" he said. Had that oblivion of mind lasted a week?

Turning away, he went on: "That's all, don't hesitate on my account. She does not know—at least not what you and I know; she thinks you are dying of love for her; as, of course, you are. I have—I mean, you have told her as much in your ravings. Yes," answering my look; "she has been here; she will be here again, when she gets this letter. . . . Good-bye, Max."

He moved to the door, resolutely, and then for the first time I seemed to realize that it was something more than a dream. I threw out my hands and called weakly after him: "Jim—one word! Jim!"

For answer I heard his footsteps on the stairs. He was gone. And then that darkness came upon me more black than ever.

I know now that the strange fever lasted altogether about three weeks, and that it was really Lottie who, finding me stricken and without a friend in the world threw off her womanly reserve and acted the unselfish part which so many noble women before her have filled. To her care, indeed, I owe my recovery, and I cannot but think that it was that time of helplessness which endeared me to her. In the sensible intervals of the delirium I always seemed to see her fearful face hovering over me; and once I heard her whispering, over and over again, as she knelt: "God, only give him back his life! I'll be a better woman and he shall be a better man!"

She will never rightly know how far Jim had acted the martyr. That lies between him and me, because in the telling of it I might lose her precious respect. My knife had wounded Jim, but only slightly, it was said. He explained it by saying that the incipient fever had unnerved my arm. As for the letter, he had hidden her destroy it. I only guess that its effect

was to bring her to my bedside in a fit of compassion.

Five years have gone, and never since have we had word of Jim. Once, indeed, I believe I saw his face, but cannot be certain.

It was just after Lottie had whispered that sweet "I will!" We had turned from the church, and I was just heading down to give her a husband's first kiss, when I thought Jim's white face looked in for a moment at the side window. Fancy it possibly was; yet it was a warning of the truth that, although I have won Lottie, there walks, and always must walk, that shadow of Jim between us.

SHORT SWORDS FOR TWO.

A Story of What Might Have Been Among Old-Time Senators.

An entire Sunday edition might be filled with stories connected with the late Judge L. Q. C. Lamar. Mr. Lamar possessed a remarkable peculiarity. Unusual excitement seemed to act upon his nerves like an opiate and put him to sleep. This was strongly exemplified after his remarkable verbal encounter with the great New Yorker, Mr. Conkling. Mr. Lamar, after scolding Conkling for life, leaving him with burning yet deferential resentment, closed as follows:

"I apologize to the Senate for this seeming unparliamentary language" (advancing to the New Yorker and throwing his index finger full in his face), "language that no man, good or bad, deserves and no brave man will wear." Immediately Mr. Lamar walked to the cloak room on the democratic side, lay down on a sofa, and in three minutes was sleeping as calmly as a babe. There was great excitement. It was believed Mr. Conkling would not submit to the language applied to him, and that, while he probably would not challenge Lamar, being an athlete, he would meet him on the streets and assault him. The late senator Zeb Vance, a Hercules in stature, who was devoted to Mr. Lamar, without the knowledge of that gentleman or of any other human being, shadowed Mr. Lamar for some days, explaining afterwards that if Conkling ever struck Lamar he intended to beat him to death. Mr. Vance, however, did not know what those intimately acquainted with Mr. Lamar knew. In all probability Mr. Lamar could have whipped them both. He prided himself upon his muscle, and has often said to the writer, "I believe I am better fitted for a prizefighter than I am for a senator. It was apprehended by some that Conkling would challenge Mr. Lamar. Conkling was known to be an expert with the short sword. Mr. Lamar said afterwards to an intimate friend in discussing the matter: 'If Mr. Conkling had sent me a challenge I should have chosen short swords.'"

"Why, Mr. Lamar," replied his friend, "Conkling is an expert with the short sword."

"I know that," replied the senator, "but I took some lessons with the short sword myself when I was in Paris the time that I was sent by the Confederacy on a mission to Russia."

"Why, Senator," the friend replied, "you have not had a short sword in your hand for twenty-five years."

"I know that," coolly replied the senator, "but I should have chosen short swords."

TRY ON SHOES AT HOME.

A New Idea in Buying Shoes That Will Be Found Convenient.

There's a new thing in the shoe business. A man who has been at it in this city for a number of years and knows all about the whims of customers and the ins and outs of the trade has hit upon the novel scheme. His plan is simple, but most practical. It is no more than to measure, fit, and complete the sale at the customer's residence. An order is received, an idea given of the goods desired, and a wagon carrying a miniature shoe stock is dispatched to the home, accompanied by an experienced salesman. All the details are attended to in the privacy of the boudoir or reception room. And thus the feet are shod without trouble, annoyance or embarrassment.

Embarrassment? Yes, there is much of it that is connected with the purchase of a pair of shoes, slippers or boots in a public store. With many fashionable and other young women it is an hour to be dreaded when the shoe store must be visited. And visited it must be, as no dissections can be given by which husband, father or brother can bring home a satisfactory shoe. The styles are constantly changing, and carefully as the standard sizes may be observed by the manufacturer, either the foot or the size of the shoe seems to change at each new purchase.

The new scheme will also be approved by many others. How many portly matrons will hail with delight the opportunity of selecting their shoes at home? Then there are housewives, young mothers, semi-invalids, gouty old men, timid young women, who will appreciate the new idea, and the mother of half a dozen youngsters, each of whom has kicked through all the stout shoe leather of a few weeks before, can already feel a relief. The husband on his way to the office simply leaves directions and the job is done.—Chicago Tribune.

"Wha' fo' you drive yo' chickens down de en' of de town fo', Lem?"

"Well, Panson, yer see Jeff Johnson he goin' ter gib a party to-night, but my chickens not gwine to 'tend.—Truth,

GREAT PEARLS.

Some of the Famous Gems That Are Worth Fortunes.

The Imam of Muscat possesses a pearl weighing twelve and one-half carats, through which you can see daylight. It is worth about \$33,000. The one owned by Princess Youssouf is unique for its beauty. It was sold by George, of Calais in 1021, to Philip IV. of Spain for 80,000 ducats. Its present value is about \$33,000. The pope, on his accession, became the owner for the time being of a pearl left by one of his predecessors upon the throne of the Vatican, which cannot be of less value than \$21,000.

The Empress Frederick has a necklace composed of thirty-two pearls, the total value of which has been estimated at \$35,000. Her mother, Queen Victoria, has a necklace of pink pearls worth \$16,000. That of the Baroness Gustava de Rothschild, made up of five rows of these precious stones, is valued at \$40,000, while those of the Baroness Adolphe de Rothschild is even more costly still. Both these ladies have given orders to their jewelers to bring them any "pearls of great price" which may come into their hands in the way of business; the gems are usually purchased by one or the other of these ladies and added to her necklace.

Good judges are doubtful whether to award the palm to either of the above or to that of the empress of Russia, which has seven rows of pure white pearls, valued at something like \$80,000 rubles, but the stones of which are perhaps less beautiful to the eye. The one belonging to the Grand Duchess Marie has six rows, and is said to have cost \$36,000.

Mlle. Dosne, a sister of M. Thiers, has a necklace of several ows, which has taken her thirty years to collect, and has cost her upward of \$15,000. The empress of Austria possesses some of the most beautiful black pearls it is possible to find, says the Gentleman's Magazine; her casket and that of the czarina of Russia are, in fact the most famous in the world for pearls of this color.

Mme. Leonide Leblanc sold her necklace of pearls a year or two ago for nearly \$30,000 but in consequence of certain matters which were whispered about at the time, she bought it back. The stones in it graduate in size, and are exceedingly beautiful in shape and luster.

A Most Vile Mariborough.

When the duke of Marlborough visited America he stopped at one of New York's swell hotels. On entering the dining-room one evening, he was seated at a table opposite one occupied by half a dozen Harvard students. Calling the waiter the duke asked for a menu-card, and exclaimed on looking it over: "Is that all? Vile—simply vile! Wine-list, waiter." After scanning the wine-list, he made the same remark in louder tones, attracting the attention of the students, one of whom immediately cried, "Waiter, menu," and on glancing at the card remarked: "Is that all? Vile—simply vile!" Another called for the wine-list, looked it over, and, with disgust in every word mimicked: "Is that all? Vile—simply vile!" The duke turned angrily in his chair, and, addressing the students in haughty tones, said: "Are you aware gentlemen, that you are mocking the duke of Marlborough?" The six Harvard students looked at each other with undisguised disappointment, exclaiming in chorus: "Is that all? Vile—simply vile!" while the room rang with laughter—Argonaut.

Heavy Work and Heavy Eaters.

Scientific research shows that meats, fish, milk and other animal foods cost three times more than flour, meal and other staple vegetable foods to get the same nutritious result. It is also shown that the heavy work of the world is not done by the meat eaters. The Russian soldiers, who built such wonderful roads and carried a weight of armor and luggage that would crush the average farm hand, lived on coarse brown bread and sour milk. The Spanish peasant works all day and dances all night, and eats only his black bread, onion and watermelon. The Smyrna porters eat only a little fruit and some olives, and yet they walk off with a load of 100 pounds. The coolies, fed on rice, are more active than the negroes fed on meat, and European farm laborers rarely get meat oftener than twice a week, yet they are strong and endure great hardships.

The Impudent Weasel.

Impudence seems to be the leading characteristic with the weasel in his relations with man. Perhaps the creature has confidence that his long, slender body can always be snatched away into safety before the ordinary human being can do him harm. At any rate, the weasel will cooly sit in the chink of a stone wall and watch the doings of men within a stone's throw of his asylum, and after nightfall the beast will crawl about fearlessly within a yard or two of any human being that may approach its haunts.

Knew How to Get a Good Thing.

First Boy—Wot's the rush?

Second Boy—I heard pa invite an old friend to dinner and I'm hurryin' home to tell mamma.

"Did y'r father send ye?"

"No."

"Then wot you runnin' y'rself to death for?"

"'Cause if mamma knows company is comin' we'll have a better dinner."

—Good News.

Equal Terms.

Miss Manyseason—Yes, I have consented to marry Mr. Goldbugg. I do not love him, but I respect him.

Miss Budd—Oh, I wouldn't worry about that. Most likely his feeling for you is chiefly veneration.

Highest of all in leavening strength.—Latest U. S. Gov. Food Report.

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QUEER QUERIES.

Witts—So you don't believe that the good die young? Potts—That used to worry me when I was a boy, but I know better now.

Mrs. Workaday—Oh, I do so like to see a good, strong, determined man. Mr. Workaday, straightening—So do I, my dear. Mrs. W.—John, the coal-bird is empty.

She—But how can you think I'm pretty when my nose turns up so? He—Well, all I have to say is that it shows mighty poor taste in backing away from such a lovely mouth.

The Best Magazine and the Cheapest.

In the present increase of cheap magazines it is well to remember that those with retail at ten cents are sold at but a few cents above the cost of the paper and printing. Judged by mere bulk they contain hardly half the amount of reading matter that is found in the larger magazines, and however interesting they may be, the features that have made the American magazine great, and especially "The Century," famous throughout the world, are not possible in these lower priced periodicals. Among these features are great historical and biographical works such as the War Papers, upon which there was expended for text and illustration some \$20,000; the "Life of Lincoln," a biography of Joseph Jefferson, etc. Paper and printing are only two of many items of cost which go into such a magazine as "The Century."

In line with its other great enterprises "The Century Co." is now beginning what is pronounced

"THE BEST LIFE OF NAPOLEON YET."

It is by Professor William M. Sloane, and is not a mere series of reproductions of prints and pictures, but a historical work of the first importance. Professor Sloane has been engaged upon it for years, much of the time having been spent by him in France, where he had access to the national archives, and all the recently discovered memoirs and reminiscences have been at his disposal. To illustrate this great history "The Century Co." have made special arrangements with many modern artists for the exclusive reproduction of masterpieces of modern art relating to Napoleon, and in addition, there will be original drawings made directly for the magazine by a great number of French and American artists.

This is only one of many features for the coming year. In addition, such a magazine as "The Century" finds it possible in its paper, printing and general typographical excellence to give the best traditions of the art of book-making, and each number of the magazine, selling for thirty-five cents, contains in well-printed and convenient form an amount of literary and art material which could not be secured in ordinary book form for less than five dollars. The high standard of "The Century" in all its departments will be more and more maintained during the coming year. Can you afford to be without such an educational influence in your household?

Falling snowflakes bring with them all the floating dust of the air, leaving the atmosphere extremely pure.

STATE OF OHIO, CITY OF TOLEDO, ss.

FRANK J. CHENEY makes oath that he is the senior partner of the firm of F. J. CHENEY & CO., doing business in the City of Toledo, County and State aforesaid, and that said firm will pay the sum of ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS for each and every case of CATARRH that can not be cured by the use of HALL'S CATARRH CURE.

Sworn to before me and subscribed in my presence this 6th day of December, A. D. 1898.

A. W. GLEASON,
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Why not go on one of the "Home Seekers' Excursions" to Kansas, Oklahoma, Indian Territory, Texas, Colorado, etc., on Dec. 18? Round trip tickets will be sold on these dates at reduced rates. Write to or call upon nearest Santa Fe route agent, or C. A. Higgins, assistant general passenger agent, Chicago, for full particulars.

"Body Rested, Mind at Ease."

That is what it is when traveling on the fast train of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway; beside there is no chance to "kick," for the accommodations are up to date, the trains keep moving right along and get there on time. These lines thoroughly cover the territory between Chicago, La Crosse, St. Paul, Minneapolis, Aberdeen, Mitchell, Sioux Falls, Sioux City, Yankton, Council Bluffs, Omaha, and Northern Michigan. All the principal cities and towns in that territory are reached by the "St. Paul" line, connecting at St. Paul, Council Bluffs and Omaha with all lines for points in the far west. Write to Geo. H. Heafford, General Passenger and Ticket Agent, Chicago, Ill., or one of their new map time tables and a brochure giving a description of the new Compartment Sleeping Cars. Tickets furnished by any coupon ticket agent in the United States and Canada. The finest dining cars in the world are run on the solid vestibule, electric lighted and steam heated trains of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway.

W. N. U., D.—XII—50.

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